

NRCS **NEWS RELEASE**

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Don Baloun begins duties as Minnesota NRCS State Conservationist

St. Paul, MN, April 26, 2010- Don Baloun, former Assistant State Conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Wisconsin, began his duties as Minnesota's state conservationist on April 26. In this top management position, he manages and provides overall leadership for agency operations statewide.

USDA-NRCS helps Minnesota farmers and landowners protect natural resources through technical and financial assistance.

Baloun joined the agency in 1979. During his career, he has held numerous staff and managerial positions in Iowa and Wisconsin including soil scientist, district conservationist, area resource conservationist and DNR/NRCS Liaison. As the Assistant State Conservationist for NRCS in Wisconsin, Baloun had responsibility for the development and implementation of the Farm Bill Easement Programs for Wisconsin, outreach and communication with NRCS partners.

Baloun has national NRCS experience as well. He has been sent six times to NRCS national headquarters (NHQ) to assist on special projects including serving as Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Policy Team leader, EQIP Manual Re-write, Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)-NHQ Program Manager Assistance, acting WRP Program Manager, Regional Assistant Chief's Office-management Analyst and Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative Policy Matrix Development.

Baloun is married and has 2 grown children.

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